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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0305
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0150
RUEHNJ/AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA 0014
RUEHGI/AMEMBASSY BANGUI 0002
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE

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SIPDIS
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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [KPKO](#) [PREL](#) [MI](#)

SUBJECT: MALAWI: COMMANDER AFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO DEPLOY TO
MINURCAT

REF: A. 08 LILONGWE 635
[1](#)B. ADDIS ABABA 325

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: Malawi Defense Force (MDF) Commander Marko Chiziko confirmed to emboffs that Malawi will seek to deploy to the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) in June 2009. Chiziko said the GOM has purchased 30 Toyota Landcruisers and provided the MDF over \$1 million USD to purchase other equipment necessary for deployment. Chiziko admitted that equipment shortfalls still remain, but said the MDF was actively engaged in discussions with the French government about potential assistance. The MDF has also asked the Embassy to help coordinate expeditious pre-deployment training through the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program for an infantry battalion beginning March 2. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) In a recent meeting with emboffs, MDF Commander Marko Chiziko confirmed that UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) asked Malawi to deploy an infantry battalion to MINURCAT as soon as possible. Chiziko said the MDF had agreed to a June deployment date. A UN inspection team is expected in Malawi in mid-March to verify deployment readiness. The MDF will likely perform a reconnaissance visit to the theater soon thereafter.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Chiziko admitted that the MDF still had equipment shortfalls, but he said the GOM's Ministry of Finance was providing an unexpected level of support. He said the GOM recently purchased thirty Toyota Landcruisers and provided an additional \$1.08 million USD to buy other equipment for the deployment. The Commander also said that the MDF had engaged the French government for additional support. According to Chiziko, the French will likely provide non-combat equipment. The MDF has also made a formal request for expeditious pre-deployment training through the ACOTA program for an infantry battallion. ACOTA has scheduled training beginning March 2, pending the resolution of some supply and logistical issues.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Comment: The GOM and MDF remain persistent in their desire to expand Malawi's peacekeeping role in Africa. MFA Political Director Paul Chinguzeni recently clarified to poloff that Foreign Minister Joyce Banda had not intended to tell acting A/S Phil Carter that Malawi would not deploy peacekeepers anywhere (Ref B), but rather that the MDF would not to Somalia. The recent vehicle and equipment purchases reinforce the GOM's commitment to peacekeeping in general. ACOTA training will help the MDF with logistic and operational preparations, however even with French help there is likely to be additional equipment needs. The MDF has mentioned communications equipment, generators, refrigerated containers, and field kitchens as priorities. Providing some U.S. Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) or other

equipment assistance would help the MDF successfully deploy
and bolster our relationship with the MDF.
BODDE